

The Frick Collection Reveals Plans for New Collection Galleries on Second Floor of Original Residence

Frick to Reopen in Renovated Fifth Avenue Home in Late 2024



New York (March 28, 2024) — The Frick Collection announced details about the transformation of the second floor of the original Frick residence, which will become accessible to the public for the first time when the institution reopens in its renovated and expanded home in late 2024. Designed by Selldorf Architects, with Beyer Blinder Belle serving as Executive Architect, the project marks the most comprehensive upgrade to the Frick since opening nearly ninety years ago. The mansion’s second floor originally served as the private living quarters of the Frick family and subsequently became the institution’s administrative offices after the residence was converted to a museum in 1935. The restoration of a suite of ten rooms and their transition into galleries will, for the first time, enable the public to experience more of the Frick’s historic buildings and remarkable collection, which has expanded significantly over the decades.

A highlight of the second floor will be the rare opportunity to experience two rooms as they were installed when the Frick family lived in the mansion. This includes a new gallery in what was the Frick family’s Breakfast Room and the Boucher Room, which is being returned to its original upstairs location in the private sitting room—or boudoir—of Adelaide Childs Frick, the wife of founder Henry Clay Frick. In a further series of second-floor galleries, visitors will experience installations inspired by the personal collecting interests of the Frick

family through time, including beloved Renaissance gold-ground and Impressionist paintings. Also on view will be significant collections that have more recently entered into the museum's holdings—some of which have yet to be regularly exhibited—ranging from ceramics to rare portrait medals and including the first permanent display of the Frick's important clocks and watches collection.

Stated Ian Wardropper, the Frick's Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Director, "Our renovation and enhancement project seamlessly integrates the old and new, while preserving the intimate visitor experience of the Frick's art and architecture. With the opening of the mansion's historic second floor, we will be able to showcase significantly more of our unparalleled collections, which have expanded in strategic and significant ways over the years through acquisitions and a number of individual and collection gifts. We cannot wait to welcome the public back to our revitalized home, where they can revisit beloved spaces and discover new aspects of our history, collection, and buildings."

"The reopening of the Frick marks the first time in the museum's history that the public will be able to access—via the grand staircase and new elevators—the historic mansion's second floor," said Xavier F. Salomon, the Frick's Deputy Director and Peter Jay Sharp Chief Curator. "While in the grand galleries of the first floor, we will continue to present larger works, such as our remarkable panel by Bellini, full-length portraits by Gainsborough and Van Dyck, and monumental canvases by Fragonard, Veronese, and Whistler, we will now have the ability to spotlight artworks and objects of a more intimate scale in focused presentations in new second-floor rooms."

NEW GALLERIES ON THE HISTORIC MANSION'S SECOND FLOOR

Complementing the grand galleries of the Frick's first floor, which include the Oval Room, East and West Galleries, Fragonard Room, Dining Room, and Living Hall, the second-floor galleries will provide entirely new opportunities for visitors to engage with the Frick's holdings and historic spaces. Careful restoration and preservation of architectural and decorative features—including ceiling murals, marble fireplaces, and elaborate carved woodwork—are bringing the intimate rooms of the former residence back to life, with varied arrangements of smaller-scale paintings, sculptures, and decorative objects from different schools and periods. Most art displays on this floor will preserve the traditional blend of objects for which the Frick is known, with select galleries centered on one period or medium.

Two of the new spaces are being restored to their appearance from when the Frick family resided in the house: the Breakfast Room and the Boucher Room. The Breakfast Room—ideally situated for morning light with its east-facing windows—has been reinstated as the family had decorated it, presenting the museum's treasured holdings from the French Barbizon school of landscape painting, including works by Corot, Rousseau, and Daubigny.

Visitors will also experience the original Boucher Room, which adorned the boudoir of Adelaide Childs Frick (1859–1931). When, after several years of transformation, the residence opened as a museum in 1935, the eight panels by Boucher depicting the Arts and Sciences were moved to the ground floor to make them accessible to the public. The second-floor room is now being carefully returned to its appearance from when Adelaide Frick was alive. The series of paintings will be presented in a full suite of restored wall paneling, complemented by a series of other works and details from the same period: a marble chimneypiece; delicate Sèvres porcelain; important French furniture that has been treated and reupholstered; and the eighteenth-century wood flooring that originally graced this Gilded Age boudoir. All of these elements have been painstakingly disassembled, treated, and relocated upstairs to complete the gallery’s setting.

Further rooms will pay tribute to the individual collecting interests of the Frick family members. The original bedroom of Henry Clay Frick (1849–1919), which has become known at the museum as the Walnut Room for its sumptuous wood paneling, will present a selection of portraits, one of the founder’s favored genres. Highlights include Romney’s famed 1782 portrayal of Lady Hamilton, which once again will hold pride of place over the room’s mantelpiece, as well as Ingres’s exquisite *Comtesse d’Haussonville* (1845), one of the most iconic paintings in the Frick’s holdings. Another thematic gallery will feature Impressionist paintings, which were considered modern art during Frick’s lifetime and which Frick chose to display in the family’s private quarters.

Other rooms pay tribute to the significant role that the founder’s daughter Helen Clay Frick (1888–1984) played in shaping the collection during her father’s lifetime and for decades after his death. This includes an installation of early Italian Renaissance paintings, a particular passion of hers—including prized works by Cimabue, Piero della Francesca, and Paolo Veneziano—presented in Helen’s former bedroom.

Additional galleries and spaces on this floor will afford visitors the chance to look closely at exceptional holdings that have come to the Frick as major gifts. The Frick’s collections have grown in a focused and complementary manner over the decades, with more than half of the institution’s holdings coming from acquisitions after the original bequest of Henry Clay Frick. Many of these collections have been shown only in part or temporarily because of space constraints. These new gallery installations include a presentation of French faience ceramics, the bequest of Sidney R. Knafel; remarkable works of Viennese Du Paquier porcelain given by Melinda and Paul Sullivan; and a special display of rare portrait medals from the unparalleled holdings of Stephen K. and Janie Woo Scher.

The installation of the Frick’s second floor has been designed by the curatorial team led by Deputy Director and Peter Jay Sharp Chief Curator Xavier F. Salomon with Curator Aimee Ng, Assistant Curator of Sculpture Giulio Dalvit, and Assistant Curator of Decorative Arts

Marie-Laure Buku Pongo, in association with the Frick's longtime exhibition designer, Stephen Saitas.

ABOUT THE RENOVATION AND ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

Designed by Selldorf Architects with Beyer Blinder Belle serving as Executive Architect, The Frick Collection's renovation and enhancement project marks the institution's first major upgrade since opening to the public in 1935. Originally designed by Carrère and Hastings in 1914 as the private residence of Henry Clay Frick, the Beaux-Arts building was transformed into a museum by John Russell Pope in the 1930s and has undergone a series of additions and changes through the decades. The current project honors the architectural legacy and unique character of the Frick, while addressing pressing institutional and programmatic needs through the repurposing of 60,000 square feet of existing space and an addition of 27,000 square feet of new construction.

Stated Annabelle Selldorf, Principal of Selldorf Architects, "Working collaboratively with the Frick leadership team, we developed a design that sensitively and thoughtfully complements the beloved Frick experience. Through a series of strategic reconfigurations and additions, we have created spaces to support the Frick's urgent institutional needs—including new rooms for exhibitions, education and other public programs, and conservation—all linked with a clear and intuitive circulation that includes, for the first time, public access to the second floor of the original Frick family home. Our vision was for a new Frick where everything visitors have always loved would feel unchanged, and anything added would feel continuous and coherent to the ensemble."

Visitors to the Frick's renovated home will enjoy unprecedented access to areas of the original 1914 residence as well as new and renovated spaces for experiencing the museum's unparalleled collection. Notably, new first-floor galleries dedicated to special exhibitions will allow the museum to mount an exhibitions program in dialogue with permanent collection works on view. Vital upgrades throughout the historic mansion are also being carried out, including skylight replacements, relighting and rewiring, and reupholstering.

The project additionally supports the Frick's public and educational programs, including the creation of its first-ever dedicated education room for courses and seminars and a new 220-seat auditorium. Featuring state-of-the-art acoustics and a striking curvilinear design, the new auditorium will offer improved sound quality for all public programs, including lectures, concerts, and performances. Moreover, the facilities of the institution's research arm, the Frick Art Reference Library, are being upgraded, including creating new spaces for researchers to meet and collaborate.

A critical aspect of the project is to upgrade the visitor experience and overall accessibility, with new entrance ramps, elevators, restrooms, and passageways connecting the museum and library. In addition, new public amenities have been added, including a café and

shop on the museum's second floor. The 70th Street Garden, created in the late 1970s by renowned landscape architect Russell Page, is also being restored.

Back-of-house improvements include the creation of state-of-the-art conservation facilities for the Frick's art and library collections. Along with the addition of a purpose-built art elevator and spaces for installation preparation and storage, these upgrades will allow the Frick to better care for its collections in perpetuity.

For more information about the Frick's renovation and enhancement project, visit frick.org/renovation.

ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE FRICK

Launched in 2019 to support the renovation and enhancement of the museum and library, the \$290 million *Campaign for the Frick* includes \$160 million invested in capital improvements and new construction and \$35 million to upgrade the infrastructure of the Frick's buildings to improve energy efficiency and long-term sustainability. A portion of the campaign supported the institution's temporary relocation to Frick Madison, which allowed the public to enjoy access to the Frick's unparalleled holdings during the construction project at its historic home. \$253 million (or 87% of the necessary funds) has been raised so far, including \$37 million from funds generated through the Frick's endowment earnings. The campaign continues through the Frick's reopening.

ABOUT THE FRICK COLLECTION

Housed in one of New York City's last great Gilded Age homes, The Frick Collection provides intimate encounters with one of the world's foremost collections of fine and decorative arts. Open to the public since 1935, the institution originated with Henry Clay Frick (1849–1919), who bequeathed his Fifth Avenue residence and collection of European paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts for the enjoyment of the public. The museum's holdings, which encompass masterworks from the Renaissance through the early twentieth century, have grown over the decades, more than doubling in number since the opening of the museum. The Frick Art Reference Library, founded more than one hundred years ago by Henry Clay Frick's daughter Helen Clay Frick and today part of The Frick Collection, is a leading art history research center that serves students, scholars, and the public.

For more information, please visit frick.org.

IMAGES

The Frick Collection's grand staircase, pre-renovation, photo: Michael Bodycomb; Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780–1867), *Comtesse d'Haussonville*, 1845, oil on canvas, 51 7/8 x 36 1/4 inches, The Frick Collection, New York, photo: Michael Bodycomb; *Plate*, French (Moulins), ca. 1760, faience (tin-glazed earthenware), diam. 9 3/4 inches, h. 1 1/2 inches, The Frick Collection, New York, gift of Sidney R. Knafel, 2022, photo: Joseph Coscia Jr.

BASIC INFORMATION

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Bloomberg Connects app:
frick.org/app

Programs: frick.org/programs

Explore: frick.org/explore

INTERACT

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